

Ilham Ezzarrouki, Ph.D.¹
Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences
University of Sultan Moulay Slimane,
Beni-Mellal, Morocco.

GENRE IDENTITY AND COMPREHENSIBILITY ASSESSMENT IN THE ARABIC VERSIONS OF SELF-HELP MANUALS

Abstract

This empirical research assesses quality in the intralingual translation of self-help-manual in the Arab world. It questions transfer competence in the versions produced by Arab therapists and life coaches who have migrated from the realm of scientific discourse to knowledge popularization. This research adopts the perspective that shows how macro and micro analyses of the subjects' textual choices contribute to investigating the genre boundaries in the prefaces of ten manuals produced in different Arabic countries. It also applies a model of text comprehensibility assessment to examine knowledge transfer in the manuals. Qualitative and quantitative research methodologies have been adopted to study the causal relationships and the distribution of rhetorical moves, meta-discourse markers and comprehensibility dimensions in the source text and in ten Arabic versions. Rhetorical analysis of the prefaces has revealed the insertion of rhetorical moves from promotional genres (i.e. product advertising; self-representation in business settings) which has affected the genre integrity and aroused the promotional effort in the prefaces. Comprehensibility assessment has proved that the subjects have compensated for their lack of linguistic competence by their bicultural competence and by predominant use of some comprehensibility dimensions ('simplicity', 'motivation' and 'perceptibility'), which have increased the level of comprehensibility in most of the versions.

Keywords: Comprehensibility Assessment, Genre integrity, Popularization.

Abbreviations: TQA: Translation Quality Assessment; ST: source text; TT: target text; L: language; SL: source language; TL: target language; SC: source culture; TC: target culture; MDMs: meta-discourse markers; CV: curriculum vitae.

1. Introduction

During the last two decades, the American psychology has been transferred to the Arab reader through the popularization of self-help or 'How to' manuals. In different countries in the Arab world, the book market has been increasingly drowning in a flood of manuals resulting from intralingual translations conducted by local experts in psychotherapy and life coaching. Despite the fact that their professional profiles show no prior translation experience or training, the local experts or therapists (the subjects in the current paper) have ventured to compete and even challenge the working environment of professional translators.

¹Email :ezzarroukiimane@gmail.com

Like native translators who depend on their bilingual competence to translate from one language (L1) into another (L2), the subjects enjoy the same innate ability to translate as a consequence of acquiring both the source language (SL) and the target language (TL). However, their bilingualism does not necessarily include the competence of transferring meanings and/or forms from one language to another. According to Lörscher (1991), 'bilinguals often lack the meta-lingual and meta-cultural awareness necessary for rendering a source language text effectively into a target-language and culture' (1991, p. 5).

Apparently, the Arab therapists work within the boundaries of the text genre of self-help manual and try to transfer complex terminology which may not be easily attainable for them as first-timers in translation. Thus, their migration from the realm of 'real' scientific discourse to the realm of popularization (also vulgarization) problematizes both the genre integrity and the text comprehensibility.

1.1. The research Questions

When taking a close look at the corpus, it is apparent that the therapists have inserted ready-made structures and different text types (idioms, Quranic verse, proverbs, poems, etc.) into the manuals, creating target texts (TTs) clearly hybrid in appearance. The hybrid nature of the TTs may potentially alter the translation *skopos* in the sense that text mixing may carry additional communicative purposes in the TTs or transmit different text functions than those of the source text (ST), which may have negative impact on the readers and disappoint them. These assumptions have led to question transfer competence in the work of the subjects and triggered the following questions: Being members of the same disciplinary community, what communicative purposes do the subjects endeavor to achieve by genre mixing? When facing the constraints of genre identity, the market pressure and the reader's expectations, how can the popularizers establish a comprehensible text? And how can we ascertain that certain texts function better than others?

1.2. Motives of the Research

This paper is particularly prompted by a curiosity to go beyond the translation classroom so as to study the textual manipulations that occur in the work place. It would be interesting to understand how the text genre is redefined in conventionalized and institutionalized settings. As far as knowledge popularization is concerned, little has been said about knowledge transfer and how the text comprehensibility is empirically measured within the fresh discipline called Transfer Studies. From this perspective, another motive behind this research is to know how to measure the text comprehensibility using one of the models of comprehensibility measurement that belong to the fields of educational psychology and readability research.

2. Review of Literature

The analysis sections in this research address decision making and language use in the work of the subjects. This paper adopts a multidisciplinary approach that involves different frameworks that help define the genre boundaries before and after translation, and grasp the process of building comprehensibility in knowledge transfer.

2.1. Rhetorical Moves Analysis

A move is a meaningful unit represented in linguistic (lexico-grammatical) forms and related to the communicative purpose of the activity in which the members of a given community are engaged (Vergaro, 2004, p.182). According to Bhatia (2004), Move Structure Analysis is optimal for assessing the integrity of texts in terms of abiding to the generic conventions or the propensity for generic innovation. Hence, based on the recent

contributions of Bhatia to Genre Analysis (1993, 1997, 2004, 2014)-especially the analysis of academic and promotional genres - and on Stine's (2002) pattern of moves for the optimal preface of self-help manual, this paper focuses on the examination of the rhetorical devices and discourse types in the corpus at a macro level.

Move analysis is adopted in this paper to promote the identification of textual segments fulfilling specific functions in the corpus in order to be interpreted in the light of the criteria provided by the genre conventions, namely the pattern of rhetorical moves that belong to a specific text genre. Table1 explains the conformity between the move pattern of the preface that introduces scientific research, as it is outlined by Bhatia (2004), and the move pattern of the optimal preface of self-help manual in particular as it is defined by Stine (2002). The purpose of the analysis at this point is to compare the ST and TTs so as to examine the genre of the preface before and after popularization. Stine's framework is adopted to analyse the TTs only in order to assess the subjects' adherence to the genre's conventional boundaries in their manuals.

Table1.

The conformity in Stine's preface move structure (2002) and Bhatia's (2004)

| Preface Rhetorical Moves (Stine, 2002) | Move conformity | Preface Rhetorical Moves (Bhatia, 2004) |
|---|---------------------|---|
| <i>To Establish Who the Book is For</i> | <i>identical to</i> | <i>Establishing Customer Needs</i> |
| <i>To Establish Your Credentials</i> | <i>identical to</i> | <i>Establishing Credentials</i> |
| <i>To Explain Why You Wrote the Book</i> | <i>identical to</i> | <i>Positive Book Description to Meet Customer Needs</i> |
| <i>To Establish Success of Your Program or System</i> | <i>identical to</i> | <i>Positive Book Description to Meet Customer Needs</i> |
| <i>To Alert Readers to Anything Special about Your Overall Approach or Book</i> | <i>identical to</i> | <i>Positive Book Description to Meet Customer Needs</i> |
| <i>To Include Brief Overview of Book</i> | <i>identical to</i> | <i>Targeting Market</i> |
| <i>To End on a Hopeful Note</i> | <i>identical to</i> | <i>Non</i> |

2.2. Metadiscourse Markers Analysis

Hyland's (2005) framework of Metadiscourse Analysis (Table2) is adopted to interpret the use and distribution of metadiscourse markers (MDMs); i.e. those textual elements whose primary function is to make contribution to the processing of the text and through which the writer manifests her/his perception of the reader's needs. Hyland's framework identifies MDMs into two major categories: interactive and interactional resources that the writer adopts to address and orient readers. The aim of MDMs analysis is to capture and examine the subjects' authorial impacts on the discourse of the preface at a micro level in the ST as well as in the TTs. The main motive behind ST/TTs comparison is to examine and interpret text change after the act of popularization.

Table 2.

Hyland's Interpersonal framework of Metadiscourse Markers (2005, p.49)

| Category | Function | Example |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Interactive Markers | Help to guide the reader through the text | Resources |
| <i>Transitions</i> | Express relations between main clauses | In addition; thus; but; and |
| <i>Frame markers</i> | Refer to discourse acts, sequences and stages | Finally; to conclude; my purpose is; |
| <i>Endophoric markers</i> | Refer to information in other parts of the text | Noted above; see figures, in section 2; |
| <i>Evidentials</i> | Refer to information from other texts | According to X; Z states; |
| <i>Code glosses</i> | Elaborate propositional meaning | Namely; e.g.; such as; in other words; |
| Interactional Markers | Involve the reader in the text | Resources |
| <i>Hedges</i> | Withhold commitment and open dialogue | Might; perhaps; possible; about |
| <i>Boosters</i> | Emphasize certainty and close dialogue | Absolutely; definitely; it is clear that. |
| <i>Attitude markers</i> | Express writer's attitude to proposition | Unfortunately; I agree; surprisingly |
| <i>Self-mentions</i> | Explicit reference to authors | I; we; my; me; our |
| <i>Engagement markers</i> | Build relations relationship with | Consider; note; you can see that |

2.3. Comprehensibility Assessment

The model of comprehensibility assessment applied in the current study is an Expert-judgment-focused model called 'The Karlsruhe Comprehensibility Concept', developed and published by Göpferich (2009) as a communication-oriented framework of TQA for non-literary texts. The model has gained insights from cognitive sciences, educational psychology, linguistics, and communication theory. The concept of comprehensibility is determined by the fulfillment of six dimensions requirements, namely *simplicity*, *structure*, *concision*, *motivation*, *correctness* and *perceptibility* (See Fig.1).

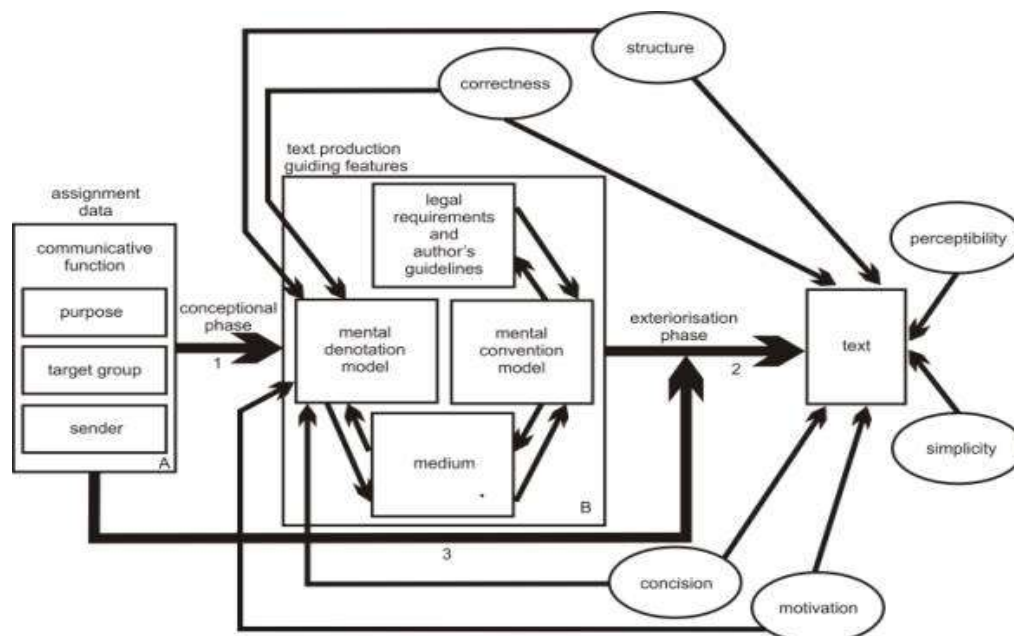


Figure 1.

Göpferich Framework of comprehensibility dimensions and their range of application (2009, p. 34).

3. Methodology

Methodology in this research is twofold: a) a qualitative methodology aims at discovering inferences and causal relationships during the analysis of the same textual unit as it appears in the source language (SL) and in ten Arabic versions; b) a quantitative methodology involves the reckoning of the occurrence, frequency and distribution of the rhetorical moves, Meta-Discourse Markers (MDMs), and comprehensibility dimensions in the corpus. The results are tabulated in numerical forms, graphs and pie charts.

In the first section devoted to the preface analysis, this study adopts a perspective that shows how macro and micro textual choices interact and contribute to TQA. At the macro level, the grounds for comparison in this section are the rhetorical moves disposition. The goal is to investigate and interpret the similarities and/or differences between the TTs and the move pattern in building the preface's rhetorical moves. At the micro level, Hyland's (2005) framework of metadiscourse Analysis enables to examine and interpret the use and distribution of metadiscourse markers (MDMs) in the ST and ten versions.

In the second section allocated to comprehensibility assessment, Göpferich's (2009) concept enables to identify the mental model, the text encoding in translation and the strategies adopted to satisfy the requirements of comprehensibility dimensions in the TTs. In fact, the model is adopted to test the ease with which knowledge can be perceived and then transferred to the reader's cognitive system for further processing. Technically, the operationalization of comprehensibility assessment relies on fulfilling the dimensions requirement used as criteria for *skopos* adequacy in TQA.

The analysis essentially focuses on instances where translation will not be adequate unless some additional material is provided, or when the translation *skopos* is modified to satisfy certain communicative purposes. Back-translation is used as a quality check.

3.1. The Subjects

The subjects in this research are ten Arab therapists and qualified life coaches who have been deliberately selected from different Arabic countries (Sudan, Jordan, Morocco, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, three from Egypt, and two from Syria). This choice might shed light on the way the same ST has been translated and the manuals handled in different geographical areas by members of the same disciplinary culture. The subjects' scientific profiles describe their professional qualifications and eminent experience in the field of psychotherapy and counseling; yet, there is no confirmation that they have received previous translation training or performed previous translations.

3.2. The Data

The source language (SL) corpus consists of the preface and an excerpt from '*Structure of Magic I*', a book co-written by the American therapists Richard Bandler and John Grinder (1975). The authors are the co-founders of a well-renowned set of techniques used in psychotherapy and counseling called 'Neuro-Linguistic Programming' (NLP)¹. In their book, the co-authors introduced their therapeutic philosophy which has gained a wider acceptance by therapists and life coaches, first in the USA and later around the world, including the Arab world.

Despite the fact that this research revolves around intralingual translation, the presence of the English source text in the analysis is essential to TQA which, according to Nord (1994), cannot be achieved without ST/TT comparison. The source text is the invariant and a frame of reference not only for evaluating the *skopos*-adequacy in translation, but also for identifying and checking out the accuracy and correctness of the text information.

The target language (TL) corpus consists of 10 Arabic manuals produced in different areas in the Arab world. Almost all the manuals carry the title: 'Neuro-Linguistic Programming' and present NLP techniques in the form of definitions or key concepts simplified for laymen. Each manual includes a preface (though in different length) that has been analysed in this in paper. In the prefaces, the therapists/ subjects address the readers and provide an overview about NLP and instruction about the manual's overall approach.

4. Research Results

4.1. The Results of Move Analysis

The analysis of the preface's move structure has revealed a different structural identity of the text genre through translation. Global examination of move distribution and frequency in the corpus has shown that the ST include three moves (out of 4) from Bhatia's move pattern, representing 75% of the rhetorical moves of the optimal preface as an academic sub-genre, whereas the TL corpus consists of 68 moves (out of 70) from Stine's move pattern of self-help preface, representing 97.14%. Surprisingly, the common moves that have been established in the entire corpus are four: *Explain Why You Wrote the Book*; *Establish Success of Your Program or System*; *Include Brief Overview of the Book*; and *Establish your Credentials*.

(1) Neuro-Linguistic Programming is an approach to communication, personal development, and psychotherapy developed by Richard Bandler and John Grinder in the 1970s in California University, the United States. The co-founders claim a connection between the neurological processes ("Neuro"), language ("Linguistic") and behavioural patterns learned through experience ("Programming") and that these can be changed to achieve specific goals in life.

In the TL corpus, the move *Explain Why You Wrote the Book*, through which all the subjects have explicitly mentioned their incentives and the reasons behind writing (compiling) the manual, has been established in all the prefaces, representing 17.24% of the total of moves of the prefaces (see Fig.2). The move *Establish Success of the Program*, which also represents 17.24%, has served the purpose of describing the manual positively to convince readers that it is worth reading. Likewise, all the subjects have managed to *Include Brief Overview of Book* (17.24%) to help the reader understand, even briefly in some TTs, what the manual is about.

Although it represents the frequency of (13.80%), the move *Establish Your Credentials* has been established in the entire corpus, whether in the preface or in the paratext of the manual. Some subjects have imitated the ST and established their credentials separately outside the preface's borders, that is, whether in the 'Foreword' or at the end of the manual, in the form of an 'Afterword', or through enclosing the author's professional CV. This move has been established by the subjects themselves in some manuals, but in other ones, by another expert from the field.

However, not all the TTs have managed to establish the move *Alert Readers to Anything Special about the Overall Approach or Book*, which represents (12.06 %). Communication in some TTs does not consider the reader's need to know some facts about the preparation of the manual such as the parts of the manual's content the therapist might deliberately omit or change, or at least, the effect this may have on readers. Moreover, in four TTs the subjects have shown an unwillingness to specify the target addressee in the preface by avoiding the move *Establish Who the Book is For*, scoring thus the lowest percentage of moves (8.62%) in the TL corpus. This can be interpreted as the writer's strategy to leave the manual available to any potential readership. In addition, almost all the TTs close positively and politely through the move *End on a Hopeful Note* (13.80%) (Only two TTs have not fulfilled this move).

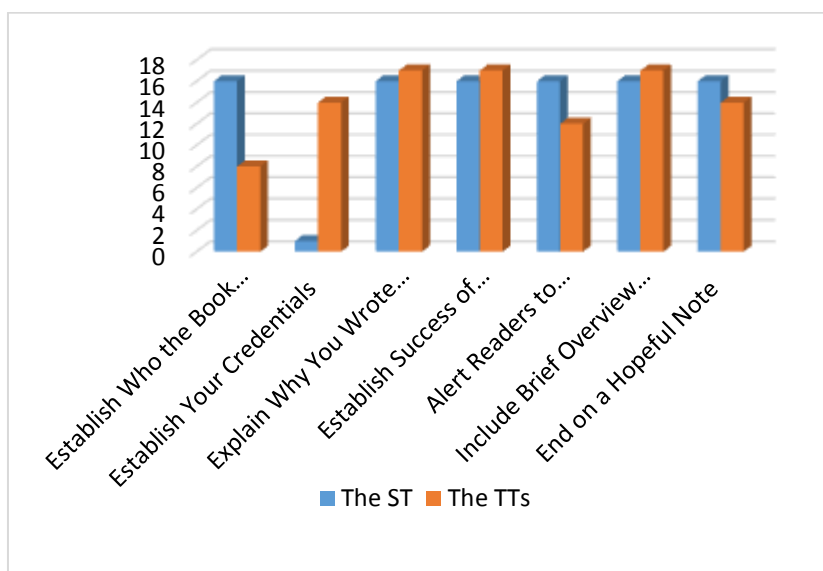


Figure.2.

The frequency of rhetorical moves in the SL and TL prefaces.

4.1.1. The additional moves

In 80% of the TL corpus, the subjects have borrowed patterns from other genres to communicate their professional purposes. Move occurrence has shown that 24 moves belonging to business and advertising genres have been inserted. The embedded moves can be classified into three categories (see Table3); the first move type is called ‘Soliciting Response’, representing 33.33% of the additional moves used essentially to encourage further communication and contact between expert and reader. The second type called ‘Pressure Tactics’ represents 25% and fulfills the communicative purpose of pushing the half-inclined customer to take an immediate decision. The third type is ‘Enclosing Documents’ with the percentage of 33.33%. This move can be fulfilled by enclosing some documents in the manual, such as inserting the subjects’ CVs inside the manuals.

Table3.

The frequency of the inserted moves in the corpus.

| Inserted Moves | ST | TTs | |
|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | Occurrence | Occurrence | Percentage |
| Soliciting Response | 0 | 8 | 33,33 |
| Pressure Tactics | 0 | 6 | 24 |
| Enclose Documents | 0 | 8 | 33,33 |
| Σ | 0 | 24 | 100% |

4.2. The Results of MDMs Analysis

Global Metadiscourse analysis has shown that both the ST and TTs have relied on interactive and interactional metadiscourse sub-categories respectively, though with some differences. Starting with the differences in the distribution and frequency of the interactive MDMs, most of the TTs show a heavy use of *Transitions* (25% of the total of MDMs in the TTs). Obviously, long TTs reflect the repetitive nature of the Arabic writing style used to establish coherence and the flow of information. The ST, on the other hand, uses less transition markers, rather it relies more on *Code Glosses* (20% of the total of MDMs in the ST). In the whole corpus, *Code Glosses* have been moderately used to provide exemplification and restatement. The same thing can be said about *Frame Markers*, *Endophoric Markers* and *Evidentials*.

Global interactional analysis has also shown that *Hedges*, frequently used in academic and scientific writings, are very scarce in the corpus, including the ST. Surprisingly, the TL corpus is more vigorous with *Boosters* than the ST. The analysis indicates that the TL popularizers have capitalized maximally on *Boosters* (32%) more than the ST (25%), but both of them prioritize the use of *Attitude Markers* (25%) to clarify and assure reading. *Engagement Markers* and *Self-mentions* have been equally used in the ST (each represent 25% of the total of moves), whereas, most of the subjects have resorted to *Self-mentions* (22%), *Attitudes markers* (25%) and *Boosters* (32%), and less *Engagement Markers* (18%).

4.3. Translation Quality Assessment

TQA has revealed a lack of consensus on a standard translation procedure in the translation of the titles. Analysis has also reflected their linguistic incompetence which has affected knowledge transfer in some versions. The presentation of long titles (representing 30% of the corpus) sounds semantically inappropriate and violates the requirements of concision, while metaphor translation has revealed a lack of transfer competence as when denotations and connotations blurred together in most of the versions, representing 60% of the TL corpus. Furthermore, the lack of transfer competence has manifested through the parallel presentation of the titles into two codes (Arabic and English), which is infinitely ubiquitous and thus strictly directionless in translation (Pym, 2010).

4.4. The Results of Comprehensibility Assessment

Comprehensibility assessment has revealed uneven fulfillment of the requirements of the six comprehensibility dimensions. The dimension of concision has been represented by 12 % among the fulfillment of other dimensions in the corpus. Most of the participants have failed to satisfy the requirements of this dimension so that 60% of the TTs are not concise which reflects a deficiency in the exteriorization phase (Fig.3).

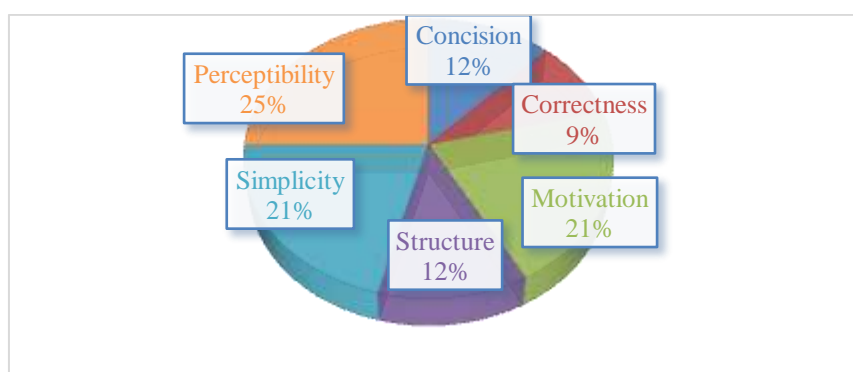


Figure 3.

The frequency of comprehensibility dimensions in the TL corpus.

Comprehensibility assessment has also revealed a lack of consensus on the offer of information reflected by the difference in the TT's length. Some TTs are quite long (60% of the corpus) due to superfluous detailing and semantic repetition leading to long formulations. On the other hand, some few short TTs have shown a lower level of explicitness (20%) represented by lexical density that increases abstraction.

The dimension of *Correctness*, representing the lowest percentage (9%) among the other dimensions, has been fulfilled differently in the corpus; the subjects have inserted culture-loaded material in non-explanatory passages instead of respecting the properties of discourse function of popularized texts by inserting domain knowledge information. In science popularization, domain knowledge is used in non-explanatory discourse units, such as providing relevant research information or presenting alternate scholarly views to help the reader process the information in its real context. Yet, in 70% of the TTs the subjects have supplied the non-explanatory passages with cultural knowledge (Quranic verse, literary quoting, poems, etc.), which results in the so-called register errors in translation (see Fig.4).

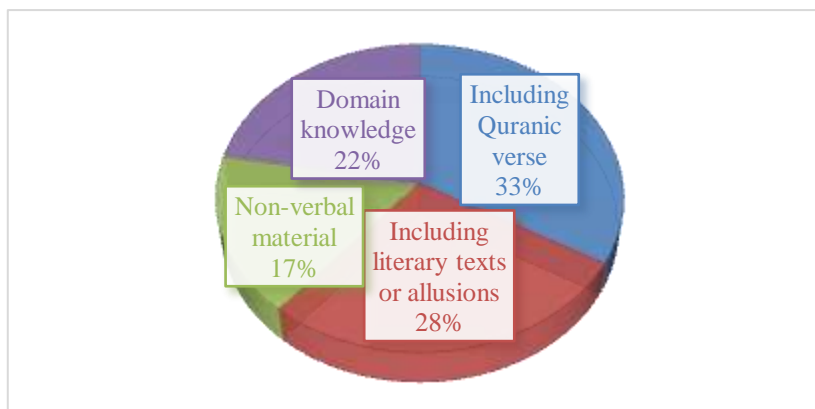


Figure 4.

The frequency of non-explanatory passages in the same TT.

Compared with the other dimensions, *Motivation* has been considerably fulfilled in the corpus (21%) by the use of different strategies to make the text more appealing to readers. However, the analysis has also reflected a lack of consensus on the amount of illustration to be used. Some TTs have exhibited an exuberant use of pictures, but some others have used irrelevant ones, while illustration has been absent in three manuals (30%). Surprisingly, recent versions of the manual are more motivating than the earlier ones. The analysis has also revealed unequal use of “avoidance strategy” by which complex information is not transferred in order not to impede *motivation*. Instead, the subjects have resorted to circumlocution and tautologies as explicitation procedures. In 80% of the corpus they have induced *motivation* by providing ‘progress monitoring’ such as Post-test and Questionnaires to engage the readers and evaluate comprehension during the reading process.

The examination of the dimension of *structure* at a macro level has revealed the juxtaposition of text units from different text types and registers. In order to boost comprehensibility, 80% of the manuals include pragmatic contexts in the form of ready-made structures that convey shared frames of meaning between SC and TC. Yet, this parallel structuring has been heavily used in some manuals which may delay the reading process. This structural error necessitates some stylistic correction as it has affected the dimension of *structure* that represents 12% among the other dimensions. *Structure* analysis at micro level has reflected a lack of grammatical order, especially in terms of theme-rheme relationship. This shortage at sentence level is not appreciated in text popularization. In some TTs, the ill-formulated structures obviously reflect the linguistic incompetence of some subjects. Moreover, the same text structure has been repeated in some manuals, reflecting the effect of mediated translation (or plagiarism in this case) on the work of the subjects.

Simplicity investigation has revealed that in most of the TTs, complex structures have been split up into simpler units which makes the text simpler and helps readers to process the text information. Therefore, the dimension of simplicity represents the percentage of 21% among the other moves. Yet, some few TTs have reflected lexical density, represented by the predominance of nominalization in 30% of the corpus. In fact, the nominal style, common in scientific writings, is discarded in popularization for it impedes comprehensibility. In the corpus, lexical density has generated shorter texts which are more complex and hard to process, whereas in some long texts, it has been surmounted through the split up of long sequences into shorter clauses, providing thus more flexibility and effectiveness in achieving the translation *skopos*.

Regardless of whether the subjects have undertaken the typographic design by themselves or resorted to the aid of typography experts, or even “borrowed” typography from the mediating texts they have consulted, *Perceptibility* has been fulfilled through diverse typographical designs in most of the corpus and represents thus the highest percentage of 25%. Almost all the manuals (80%) have included diverse para-verbal designs and visual layouts to guarantee reading comfort. Again, the recently published manuals are typographically rich and more appealing than the earlier versions. The latest manuals clearly show that the participants have obviously acquired a typographic design competence, whereas the earlier ones exhibit a naïve and conventional typographic awareness.

5. Discussion

5.1. Move Analysis

Global rhetorical analysis has confirmed that the differences between the ST and the TTs are statistically significant, especially in terms of the embedded moves. Borrowing some rhetorical moves from other genres used in product advertising and self-representation in business settings has aroused the promotional effort in the preface’s discourse. Genre embedding has served the construction and fulfillment of the popularizers’ promotional intentions such as presenting or promoting the manual as a product, introducing the therapist as an expert who offers her/his services, and encouraging the reader-as a prospective customer- to connect with the therapist.

In the same vein, the manual’s paratext has been exploited to foster the promotional flavor in the TTs through some techniques customary in promotional genres. For instance, the therapist’s picture on the cover of some manuals is a common technique in print advertisements. The enclosed CVs about the therapists’ professional achievement and long experience is a technique of ‘service offering’ in job applications. In some TTs, “Pressure Tactics”, a technique used to solicit the customer’s reaction, is borrowed from advertising genres. The establishment of the therapist’s credentials- in the preface, in the foreword or through the CV- is an aspect of persuasion and self-promoting. Thus, the reader would be more inclined to contact the expert as soon as he notices her/his professional address or telephone number.

In addition, authorship contribution has also highlighted the promotional effort in the prefaces that have been written by other experts from the field who have addressed readers directly, convincing them through positive arguments in favor of the manual and the therapist. Whether written by the therapists themselves or by their colleagues, the discourse in most of the TTs has been load, announcing the presence and voice of the therapist as a commercial agent who promotes the manual as a product, and exploits the manual’s paratext to offers her/his services.

5.2. MDMs Analysis.

Micro level analysis has also revealed the promotional effort in the TTs and the therapists’ struggle to impose their professional identities in the discourse. Metadiscourse analysis has revealed a predominance of interactional features more than interactive resources in the TTs. Most of the subjects have resorted to interactional sub-categories, namely *Boosters*, *Self-mentions* and *Attitudes markers* at the expense of *Engagement Markers*. This mirrors their tendency to impress readers and promote their own services more than to engage them in the communication. On the contrary, the SL co-authors show more inclination to involve the reader in the discourse through the use of more *Engagement Markers* in the ST. Accordingly, the Arab therapists have projected a powerful authorial identity similar to their professional identities at the place work.

5.3. Comprehensibility Assessment

Comprehensibility assessment has revealed that the prevailing mental model in most of the TTs may not be correct as the requirements of *correctness*, *concision* and *structure* have been violated; yet, it has served to create some TTs that are, to some extent, functionally equal to the ST. Conducting knowledge transfer from a cultural perspective might reduce error chances, at least at the communicative and pragmatic levels, and trigger comprehensibility to a great extent. More than the other dimensions, *perceptibility*, *motivation* and *simplicity* have been established by the majority of the subjects who seem aware of the fact that comprehensibility cannot be attained without motivating and engaging the reader and by using simple and perceptible material, especially in texts about psychology. Using cultural knowledge, which is common in literary translation, has served the discourse function of enabling readers to generate meanings from non-explanatory passages and relate them to the meanings in the explanatory sequences.

Although they have been conducted in different geographical areas, almost all the Arabic versions have reflected similar manipulation of the genre boundaries. Belonging to the same disciplinary community, they have manifested similar professional intentions, and endeavored to fulfill almost the same communicative purposes of promoting their manuals and their occupational services. Moreover, they have adopted a target culture-oriented strategy and familiarization which has led to the predominance of genre conventions expected by the target audience, though at the expense of some comprehensibility dimensions.

The Arab therapists- whether deliberately or not- have not adhered to the move structure of the preface of self-help manual. In fact, they have fulfilled their professional aspirations-or “private intentions”- at the expense of the genre integrity. Hence, the first hypothesis in this research seems to be confirmed: the subjects have actually inserted additional communicative purposes in the TT and thus violated the genre pattern of the preface as an introductory sub-genre. Strikingly, the borders of the preface’s moves have been blurred because of the insertion of moves inherent to business genres which make the preface likewise a kind of business genre. Moreover, the subjects have also dispersed their promotional effort and exhibited their expertise and credentials throughout the paratext of the manuals, reminding the reader that they are members of some professional community.

Genre invasion in this study has been justified by the subjects’ intentions to increase the promotional efforts in the preface so as to promote their manuals and their services, build up expert/reader relationship and prepare for face-to-face contact with readers/customers. Avoiding the market competitiveness may be another reason behind borrowing and mixing moves from different promotional genres into the body of the preface. Yet, one must admit, according to Bhatia, that generic integrity is not something given; it is versatile, often blurred at the edges, sometimes contested which leads to differing perceptions (2004, p. 153). Given that the therapists belong to a disciplinary community, they have abided to their professional intentions at the expense of the genre conventions. In so doing, they have not only manipulated the genre boundaries of the preface, but also imposed their professional identities on the TTs ‘discourse.

5.4. TQA

TQA has unveiled a lack of consensus among the subjects on standard domain knowledge terminology, especially on the measures and translation procedures to overcome the linguistic challenges such as metaphors frequently used in psychological nomenclature. Seeing that most of the participants have failed to maintain the same degree of metaphoricity between SL and TL, it seems clear that they lack practice and expertise in translation and their abilities need to be open to improvement. Thus, the second hypothesis regarding the lack of competence on the part of the therapists seems to be borne out in this study.

Moreover, the subjects' transfer incompetence in some TTs answers the research question concerning their reliance on other material during the process of mediated translation. The influence of mediated translation on the corpus has manifested in the way some therapists have consulted and imitated other popularizers and/or translators whose works appear on the bibliography list in the TL manuals. Obviously, they have sought support and direction from different mediating texts from which they have borrowed (plagiarized) several sequences and put them unaltered in their manuals. It seems clear at this point that they have resorted to mediating texts because of their lack of linguistic competence.

To compensate for their lack of competence, the majority of the therapists have manifested remarkable pragmatic and bicultural competences in their work. Under the pressure of the market competitiveness and the properties of the genre identity, as well as the reader's needs and expectations, they have struggled to produce versions that seem to fulfill the conventions of a familiar genre in the target culture, namely the sermon. The therapists have relied on genre membership and the reader's familiarity with a special local genre to transmit their domain knowledge and boost the text comprehensibility. It seems that such genre manipulations answer the research questions about the optimal way to establish a comprehensible text for laymen.

The main criterion in TQA within the functionalist paradigm is whether or not a text fulfills its communicative function (or *skopos*). Despite the fact that the level of persuasion is higher in the TTs, both ST and TTs can be said to be largely 'equifunctional'. Hence, the mental model used in knowledge transfer has been reflected by the participants' tendency to elaborate texts that are functionally adequate and communicatively fitting in with socio-pragmatic requirements, though with some linguistic shortage in a few versions. In fact, to guarantee comprehensibility, the participants remolded a mode of transfer in which the target genre plays a central role.

Obviously, the therapists have managed to create their own mode of discourse and rhetorical pattern to communicate their private intentions, altering at the same time the genre conventions of the original and imposing different genre shape and alternative sets of linguistic choices. Nevertheless, due to the use of cultural knowledge instead of domain knowledge in non-explanatory passages, the substantive scientific content of the source text when it has been replaced by local knowledge, has resulted in TTs that are pragmatically adequate but factually inadequate (incorrect), especially at the level of text information. Comprehensibility assessment showed that most of the subjects failed to maintain the requirements of text Concision, Correctness and Structure at the exteriorization phase, but they managed to satisfy the requirements of Motivation, Perceptibility and Simplicity in most of the versions. Some few performances do not rank very high and have been embedded into poor sentence structure and naive typographic design; yet, most of the TTs have sounded functionally adequate. It seems that such competence deficiency is common in the work of novice and natural translators.

Obviously, the therapists have shown some awareness of the reader's preferences and her/his socio-cultural context. By exploiting their cultural knowledge (more than domain knowledge), they reflect an innate ability to socialize with the text, acting as intermediaries for those whom unknown domain knowledge is a communicative barrier. Being novice translators, the subjects in this study are not expected to produce translations of high quality competence; yet, they have struggled to communicate meanings and transfer knowledge out of undergoing socialization with the text genre, providing an instance of culture-specific projection and seeing the world through the filter of their own culture.

6. Conclusion

This paper provides a case study that contributes to the understanding of the collaborative practices that take place in disciplinary settings and the manipulation of the genre conventions in translation. It shed light on the community of the Arab therapists who have created their professional discourse in the shape of different Arabic versions of self-help manual we actually encounter in the book market. In fact, more light was shed on mediated translation and it is conducted in the work place and how it enables some individuals to collectively interact- though indirectly- and produce comparable TTs of the same ST.

This paper also goes deeply into the phenomenon of Natural Translation that is coextensive with the translational practices of bilinguals. Unfortunately, Natural Translation is less addressed in translation classroom and research. This study has demonstrated that translation ability generated from bilingualism does not necessarily guarantee competence or expertise. The therapists have manifested performances that are similar to the rendering of 'natural' translators in terms of producing naive/native modes of communication. This paper undoubtedly approves Toury's (1984; 1995) opinion on Natural Translation which says that the production of socially acceptable translations is learnt and not an innate behavior or, in the words of Harris and Sherwood (1978), 'innate predisposition'. The practices of the therapists/bilinguals demonstrated that translation ability is not equal to translation competence and natural translation is not inherently coextensive with bilingualism, but necessitates in-depth study and practice to develop transfer competence.

The research findings may interest translation students and trainees and help them reconsider the difference between ability and competence and urge them to improve their innate ability to translate through more study and practice. What is more, the comparative analysis of genre conventions applied in this research has revealed the way some professionals reshape and manipulate the genre boundaries to fulfill their vocational aspirations. This will help translation students to understand that genre, especially in professional settings, does not necessarily revolve around conventions; rather it is about innovation and creativity. Hence, this study is a contribution to a significant movement from the idealized world of the classroom towards the realities of the world of work in which individuals construct their professional identities and promote products and services through textual material. Furthermore, such findings will foster in translation trainees a metacognitive awareness of their own cultural knowledge and how to exploit it in practice. This awareness will help them to appropriately discern, compare and/or contrast discourse patterns and genre conventions. More than that, it will help them understand how to write beyond the genre boundaries without missing the text function.

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